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7-25-01

PATENTS

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of

Anne Klaas DE GROOT et al.

Serial No. 09/423,368

GROUP: UNASSIGNED

Filed December 30, 1999

Examiner: UNASSIGNED

TENSIONER

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL UNDER 37 CFR \$1.102

RECEIVED

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

JUL 20 2001

Sir:

703600 MAIL ROOM

In accordance with 37 CFR \$1.102 and MPEP \$708.02, the applicants hereby request that the present application be advanced out of turn for examination. A pre-examination search has already been made by the International Bureau in connection with the corresponding international application Serial No. PCT/NL98/00245, filed May 4, 1998. The results of such search are already of record in the present application by virtue of the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 14, 2000. One copy of each of the references identified by such search was included with the previously-filed Information Disclosure Statement.

A detailed discussion of the references in connection with the present invention as claimed follows:

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The invention according to claim 1 refers to a tensioner for clamping cables, flexible pipes or bars and moving them forwards in a controlled manner, comprising at least two conveyor means, each intended to displace one or more clamping members, the shape of which is adapted to the external shape of the cables, flexible pipes or bars and the conveyor means each being attached to a main frame element in such a manner that the clamping members can be displaced while clamped around the cables, flexible pipes or bars.

Such tensioners are generally known and are described for instance in the documents mentioned in the search report relevant for the present invention.

The known tensioners have the drawback that their design and the number of conveyors depend on the type of cable. This means that a separate tensioner must be provided for each type of cable, which entails relatively high investment costs.

This problem is solved according to claim 1 by the fact that the conveyor means with the clamping members are of modular design, so that various tensioner designs can be constructed with the aid of a number of conveyor means and a number of main frame elements. Independent claim 6 refers to a conveyor means intended for the tensioner according to claim 1. The modular design of the clamping members in

claims 1 and 6 means that it is not necessary to provide a new type of tensioner for each type of cable or pipe. Instead of a large number of different tensioners only a limited number of conveyor means is needed. According to the invention 2, 3, 4 or even more conveyor means can be assembled to form one conveyor.


Because this idea is neither anticipated by nor obvious in light of the prior art documents, the subject matter of the present claims is believed to be patentable.

Claims 2 and 5 recite special embodiments of the tensioner according to claim 1, which are also believed to be patentable.

Enclosed herewith is the petition fee required by 37 CFR §§1.102 and 1.17(h).

Respectfully submitted,

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July 17, 2001

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THE SPE/EXAMINER NEEDS TO FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING PRIOR
TO A DECISION BEING MADE ON THE PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL



THERE IS NO RESTRICTION/ELECTION REQUIRED IN THIS CASE



THERE IS A RESTRICTION/ELECTION REQUIRED AND THE ATTORNEY
HAS ELECTED WITHOUT TRAVERSE



THERE IS A RESTRICTION/ELECTION REQUIRED AND THE ATTORNEY
HAS REFUSED TO ELECT WITHOUT TRAVERSE (MAKE SURE
ATTORNEY KNOWS THAT HIS PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL WILL BE
DENIED IF ELECTION IS MADE WITH TRAVERSE)

PLEASE RETURN THE CASE ASAP TO:

STEVEN MEYERS

CPK5-7Y01

(UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD AN OFFICE ACTION BE ISSUED
PRIOR TO THE PETITION BEING DECIDED)

8/4/01

DONALD P. WALSH
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600